

Filed for intro on 06/04/2001

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 417
By Harper

A RESOLUTION To congratulate Eakin Elementary School of Nashville upon receiving honorable mention in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's nationwide poster contest.

WHEREAS, The citizens of this State and of the United States have lost a large portion of our national heritage during the 20th century, as a result of the loss of thousands of historic buildings due to neglect, razing and urban renewal; in the latter decades of the past century, the trend has been slowed, but not stopped; and

WHEREAS, The City of Nashville has lost many beautiful and historically significant structures of its early years, a loss that cannot be replaced and can only be recalled where photographic or other pictorial records survive; and

WHEREAS, Now, a growing number of Nashvillians and other Tennesseans have recognized the value of our architectural heritage, and have joined together to work for the preservation of significant historic structures; and

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WHEREAS, Eakin Elementary School at 2400 Fairfax Avenue in Nashville is one such historic complex; the school, comprised of Cavert School, constructed in 1928, and Eakin School, constructed in 1936, is collectively known as Eakin Elementary School; and

WHEREAS, Eakin and Cavert are landmarks of the Hillsboro-West End neighborhood; the neighborhood developed along with Vanderbilt University and has housed many Vanderbilt faculty and staff members; and

WHEREAS, As population grew and the pressure on Nashville public schools increased, Cavert School was built on land deeded to the city by Olin H. Landreth, who later became Dean of the Vanderbilt School of Engineering, to replace the smaller nearby Read School. The two-story neoclassical brick building was characterized by the classical Corinthian columns and pediments then considered appropriate for buildings in which knowledge was imparted; and

WHEREAS, When Eakin School opened as an elementary school in 1937, grades 1-6 were transferred from Cavert, which became a junior high school. Eakin's U-shaped building, with secondary wings and a courtyard, embodied a stripped-down classical style that represented a compromise between tradition and modernism, and reflected the realities of economically lean times, having been built with Works Progress Administration Funds and labor; and

WHEREAS, Cavert was named for Dr. A. J. Cavert, a medical doctor who had been Assistant Superintendent of Schools in the late 1800s; Eakin was named for Mrs. John Hill Eakin, the first woman to become a member of the Nashville City Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, While the two buildings' neoclassical style is largely intact, the evolving needs of the school system led to an addition to Cavert in 1937 and the construction of a new gymnasium along one side in 1964; Eakin acquired four classrooms on its primary wing in 1954; and

WHEREAS, Generations of Nashvillians, from all parts of the city and county, have been educated at Eakin and Cavert; today, the two buildings serve 700 students in grades K-6 as

Eakin Elementary School. Under the Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County School Improvement Plan, Eakin is designated to become a K-4 school in the near future; and

WHEREAS, Initial plans called for the buildings to be razed to permit construction of a new building; neighbors, teachers, students, parents, alumni, and other citizens, noting that the two buildings were contributing factors in the designation of the Hillsboro-West End National Register Historic District and that they were listed in the National Register of Historic Places, united to work for the renovation and preservation of Cavert and Eakin; and

WHEREAS, In response to Metro Council Bill BL2001-607 and Zoning Change Proposal No. 2001Z-025U-10, an Historic Landmark overlay district was applied to the 9.3 acre Eakin Elementary School site on April 3, 2001; the overlay district is intended to "preserve buildings, structures, or sites whose demolition or destruction would constitute an irreplaceable loss to the quality and character of Nashville and Davidson County"; and

WHEREAS, The National Trust for Historic Preservation sponsored a nationwide poster contest for the observance of its May 13-19, 2001 National Historic Preservation Week; the chosen theme was "Restore, Renew, Rediscover Your Historic Neighborhood Schools," an effort to draw attention to what the Trust calls, "some of America's best loved and most endangered community landmarks - older and historic neighborhood schools"; and

WHEREAS, A poster, created by graphic artist and Eakin parent, Michael Nott, was selected from among 145 entries submitted to receive one of ten "Honorable Mention" awards in the contest; the fortuitous coincidence of the poster contest and the success of the Eakin School supporters in securing its preservation was a delightful occasion of serendipity; and

WHEREAS, The members of this General Assembly are both pleased and delighted to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of all involved in the preservation of the Cavert and Eakin buildings; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CONCURRING, That we congratulate the friends of Eakin Elementary School in securing the preservation of one of Nashville's significant historical landmarks and Mr. Michael Nott for winning "Honorable Mention" laurels for his entry in the National Trust for Historic Preservation 2001 nationwide poster contest. All supporters of historic preservation are heartened by this success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.